

# News Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## Public Invited to Celebrate 158<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CA Gold Rush

**COLOMA** – At the place where gold was first discovered in California, the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park is hosting a celebration with live history presentations, a speakers' symposium, book signing, interactive period trade demonstrations and music from the Gold Rush era.

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill set off one of the greatest mass migrations in history. To mark the occasion, California State Parks and the Gold Discovery Park Association invite the public to join them in celebrating Gold Discovery Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on January 21. The park is located on Highway 49, between Placerville and Auburn. For more information, call (530) 295-2162.

The day will begin at 11 a.m. with a gold discovery reenactment – "Gold Discovery Before the Rush" – on the banks of the American River at the very site where James Marshall found gold in 1848, followed by interpretive presentations at the Mormon Cabin, Sutter's Mill, and the Miner's Cabin. "Gold Discovery Before the Rush" continues at 1 pm. Visitors are invited to see many of the Park's historic houses, which will be open all day and staffed by docents who will share the history of each site.

The day's activities include the raising of the Australian and Victoria flags in honor of Coloma's sister city, Clunes, which is the town where Australia's gold rush began in 1851.

It was in 1847 when John Sutter asked James Marshall to build a sawmill along the banks of the American River. Sutter needed lumber for his expanding agricultural enterprises in California's Sacramento Valley and Marshall, a carpenter, was looking for a job.

Marshall and Sutter chose Coloma as the site for the sawmill. It provided a rushing river for power and a forest of pines for lumber. As the sawmill neared completion in January 1848, it became clear that the tailrace, where the water leaves the mill, needed to be deepened. Marshall's solution was to use the force of the water itself to scour out a deeper channel. The increased force of water through the tailrace caused sand and gravel to lodge between boulders and in small crevices.

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On the morning of January 24, 1848, James Marshall reached into a shallow pool of water at the side of the tailrace. He scooped up a handful of sand, gravel and mud. And a few flakes of golden metal. "Hey boys," he lifted his voice to workmen around him, "by God, I believe I've found a gold mine." It was a moment that was to change the course of history.

Visitors are welcome to Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park all year round. The Park is open from 8 am to 5 pm; the Museum is open from 10 am to 3:30 pm seven days a week. The park is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. For more information call the Park Museum and Visitors' Center at (530) 622-3470 or the Events Line at (530) 295-2162.

The event is supported by the Gold Discovery Park Association; a nonprofit organization dedicated to the interpretation and conservation of Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. To learn more about the association, visit [www.marshallgold.org](http://www.marshallgold.org).

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